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Governor Deval Patrick

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For Immediate Release - November 26, 2013

Governor Patrick and University of Massachusetts Announce Downtown Springfield Satellite Center To Create Growth and Opportunity

First of its kind center for Umass expected to begin offering
classes in fall 2014

SPRINGFIELD – Tuesday, November 26, 2013 – Governor Deval Patrick and University of Massachusetts (Umass) President Robert L. Caret today announced a new Umass satellite center located in the Tower Square office tower in downtown Springfield to significantly expand the University's presence in western Massachusetts and unlock a range of degree opportunities to students of all ages that will be tailored to the meet the region's workforce needs.

"Today is a great day for Springfield and the entire Umass system," said Governor Patrick. "This satellite center will bring vitality to downtown Springfield, and open up new educational and job opportunities for the residents of Springfield and beyond."

"The satellite center represents a new chapter in the longstanding relationship between the University of Massachusetts and the city of Springfield," said Umass President Robert L. Caret. "We are pleased to find suitable space that will allow the University to expand its presence and provide residents of the city and region with the type of high quality, affordable public higher education option that has come to define

a Umass degree.'

The satellite center, which is expected to be operational by fall 2014, will be the first center of its kind for the University of Massachusetts system. Umass Amherst, located about 25 miles away from Springfield, will be the lead campus for the satellite center, with other Umass campuses providing academic programs. The satellite center will complement Umass Amherst's active involvement in the Springfield area, where faculty and staff are engaged in more than 120 programs in health, fine arts and the creative economy, natural sciences, engineering, green industries, management, sports and education.

Umass has selected Tower Square, an office tower owned by Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Co, to house the center. Umass will lease approximately 27,000 square feet of space on the second floor of the building at 1500 Main Street, with the right to use an additional 1,600 square feet of retail space on the first floor.

"This is a momentous day as a great city and a great university formalize a relationship that has been a long time in the making," said Henry M. Thomas III, chairman of the Umass Board of Trustees and a Springfield native. "To have a strong and vivid Umass presence in the heart of downtown Springfield represents a major step forward for our city. We are taking a step into a more dynamic and prosperous future."

"Expanding access to the University of Massachusetts' renowned academic offerings to students in the city of Springfield and the region is a winning strategy for growing their local economy and creating opportunity for residents," said Secretary of Education Matthew Malone.

The Amherst campus's Design Center located in the City's Court Square area is just one example of an inviting and creative workspace in downtown Springfield where Umass Amherst faculty and students have worked with the city to find creative urban planning solutions.

"An expanded Umass presence in Springfield is the contemporary model for engagement that has always been central to the university's land grant mission," said Umass Amherst Chancellor Kumble R. Subbaswamy. "This new facility will enhance Umass Amherst's already strong presence in Springfield and will be a driving force in promoting the economic vitality of both the city and the region."

Umass Amherst is also moving its New England Public Radio network to a new, 17,000-square-foot downtown Springfield facility that is scheduled to open in the spring. The Pioneer Valley Life Sciences Institute, a partnership between Umass Amherst and Springfield's Baystate Medical Center, is beginning work on establishing a Health Informatics and Technology Innovation Center after receiving a \$5.5 million grant from the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center last summer.

"This is exciting news for both the City of Springfield and the University of Massachusetts. A satellite center in Tower Square will strengthen the relationship between Umass and the region, and brings with it endless educational and economic development opportunities," said US Congressman Richard E. Neal. "A Umass center downtown, and the students and employees it will bring, has the potential of revitalizing our central business district. And it reinforces western Massachusetts' reputation as the Knowledge Corridor. I intend to work closely with President Caret and Mayor Domenic Sarno to make this unique project a success."

Mayor Domenic J. Sarno stated, "This is something my administration has been

working on for six years. This is an exciting announcement that will bring energy and excitement along with the more eclectic mix we are striving for downtown. I would like to thank Governor Deval Patrick, Umass President Robert Caret, Umass Amherst Chancellor Kumble Subbaswamy and Chairman of the Board of Trustees Henry Thomas for all of their hard work in making this happen. This is a great next step in a truly mutually beneficially relationship.”

The Tower Square property was one of four offers the Umass Building Authority received after issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) last summer, seeking 25,000 square feet of space suitable for classrooms, faculty offices, and other uses, with the option of doubling the amount of space at a later date. The agreement with Tower Square includes a five-year lease, with two, five-year renewal options that could extend the lease for another 10 years.

Among the reasons cited by President Caret and other Umass officials for selecting Tower Square was that it offers prominent branding opportunities – allowing Umass signage on the building’s exterior, as well as offering the first-floor retail space. In addition, the complex offers ample room for expansion and structured parking that allows students and employees to access the building from elevators in the parking garage. The property’s existing condition also requires fewer alterations than some of the alternatives, making Tower Square the more economical choice.

The selection of a location for the Springfield satellite center capped more than a year of research, planning, discussions, and focus groups involving Umass, Springfield residents, and leaders from education, business, politics, civic and community-based organizations. Focus groups organized by the Umass Donahue Institute provided evidence of broad support in the city for a satellite center. Aside from the economic development boost it will provide Springfield, those interviewed emphasized the important role a satellite center would play in removing barriers to employment for skilled workers.

Other Umass campuses are working on developing an assortment of academic programming that would be responsive to the educational, economic and social needs of Springfield area residents. Those academic programs would be offered in a blended manner that allows students to attend courses on-site and through UmassOnline.

UmassOnline will open an onsite office at the satellite center and make available the full array of UmassOnline courses and degrees offered by the five campuses. Umass campuses and other participating institutions, which are expected to include area community colleges, may offer their “home” programs such as two-year associate degrees leading to bachelor’s degrees, as well as undergraduate and graduate degree programs in areas such as public health, advanced manufacturing, cyber security, teacher education and business administration.

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